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By-Wilson, Vernon E.

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Professional schools can expect to be faced with at least 2 urgent public demands: the expansion and improvement of professional training programs and the provision of certain types of professional community service by universities. The university could attempt to increase the supply of professionals by: expanding enrollement at professional schools and creating additional schools; taking advantage of theoretical and methodological advances so as to shorten the length of educational programs; fostering programs to enable the existing supply of professionals to be more productive. The university must also address itself to the problems of content and methodology of professional education. A professional must be action-oriented and his education should prepare him for diagnosing and solving real problems. Ways should be found to nurture the critical judgment of students. Because cricial decisions affecting society will probably continue to be made by nonprofessionals, professional schools have a responsibility to provide information about the relationship of their knowledge to the solution of social problems. Specific steps that could help shorten the gap between professional schools and demands society makes of the professional are: the establishment of computerized "fact banks" of information; establishment of a small team of faculty members who would critically review the clinical training offered to students; and initiation of exploratory conferences with members of various fiduciary boards so that the university can learn more about their educational needs. (JS)

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WILSON, VERNON E.

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Section 12
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PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS AND PROFESSIONAL DEMANDS: CLOSING THE GAP*

Vernon E. Wilson
Vice President, Academic Affairs
University of Missouri

As we move into an era in which the knowledge of a society represents its principal resource, the universities and colleges which operate professional schools can expect increasing public demands to be made of them. Certainly we can anticipate at least two rather urgent requests. These include the expansion and improvement of professional training programs and the provision of certain types of professional community services by the universities.

These increased demands stem in part, it seems to me, from the very nature of our rapidly changing society. In the U.S. we devote more of our disposable income and employ more of our work force in the service sector of our economy than we do in the production of raw materials or in manufacturing. The professions represent a key component in that service sector. It is at the critical points of intersection between the individual and his environment that the professions are called upon. For example, we depend on professionals to insure the provision of our basic civic rights through the functioning of our judicial system and the rule of law. We turn to professionals for the education of our children and of ourselves - a service upon which Americans have always placed high value, but never higher than now and in the foreseeable future. We look to professionals for the design and implementation of programs of social welfare to aid persons who are unable to help themselves. We expect professionals to provide programs of health care without which society would lose its intellectual and physical vigor and its basic capacity to pursue other human goals and values. We rely on professionals to provide the technology by which an increasingly fragmented and complex society can be interrelated and by which it is possible to advance the number of options available to people for the enrichment of their lives and the development of their potentials.

In a very real sense then it is the professions that stand at the interface between the knowledge which the university discovers, analyses, stores, and disseminates and the people for whose benefit this knowledge is to be applied. We should not be surprised by the realization that society is concerned about the development of professions, nor that universities share that concern. If we acknowledge the present affluence and increasing educational sophistication, it seems reasonable to assume that we can expect for the foreseeable future a greater demand for professional services than we can hope to meet. A primary effort of the university, therefore, should be directed towards reducing the disparity between what the public demands and what the professions are able to supply. Several courses of action would seem appropriate.

1) We can attempt to increase the supply of professionals through a number of means. These could include:

   a) Expanding the enrollment of our professional schools and creating additional schools.

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b) Taking advantage of the advances in the theory and methodology of education so as to shorten the length of educational programs for professionals, thus making these people available for service at an earlier date.

c) Fostering programs which will enable our existing supply of professionals to be more productive.
Under this approach several possibilities might be considered. An analysis of the practice of medicine, for instance, suggests that much could be done to enhance both the efficiency and the effectiveness of many medical practitioners. Technological resources now exist which can be used to make available to the individual practitioner, wherever he might be located, the knowledge which exists in the most sophisticated medical centers and institutions. Moreover, this knowledge can be made available to the practicing physician in a "pre-packaged, problem-solving" format which should improve the underlying logic by which professionals diagnose and treat problems, as well as speed up the flow of relevant information from discovery to validation in practice.
Better use of allied health groups offers another means of increasing both the professional medical manpower available and the effectiveness of that available supply. More extensive application of computers and other electronic devices offers another as yet largely untapped source of assistance for menial of time-consuming tasks. Studies show us, for example, that most physicians spend a large portion of their time doing tasks that others - either man or machines - could do and thus release the physician's time for the responsibilities appropriate to his training, e.g., more time with patients and less time with papers.
We need better "job descriptions" for professionals than currently exist so that their duties may be more clearly designated and understood, both by themselves and by others who make assorted kinds of demands upon them.
Another way in which our existing supply of professionals can be made more productive lies in what we have termed, in the health sciences, "the activated patient." The essence of this concept is that advances in public education and communication have occurred more rapidly than the professions have recognized, with the result that the professions are often under-utilizing the knowledges and skills possessed by their patients or clients. Perhaps this pool of talented consumers represents the single most fruitful avenue of approach for extending the services of our scarce supply of professional manpower.
We have also recognized in recent years the critical necessity of providing effective continuing education to those professionals now in practice so that they may continue as fully productive members of their professions. Their services may represent increasingly smaller returns to their clients due to their inability to use modern technology, current knowledge, and the most advanced of professional quality standards.

2) A second major problem area to which the University must address itself pertains to the content and methods of professional education. It can be postulated that the prime objective of a professional is to apply a sophisticated body of knowledge and skills to the solution of problems faced by people. In so doing he will follow self-imposed standards of performance, higher standards than those which could be legally required. The professional is, in other words, a morally responsible problem-solver on behalf of people in difficulty. Therefore, if the

professional is to be of service to his clients, he must be action-oriented.

The problem for the educational institution then becomes one of maintaining and enhancing the action orientation which indeed most students bring with them as they enter a course of professional study. In the long and arduous period of professional education, too frequently the students are not permitted to engage in activities which satisfy their strong desires to be of service to others. Instead, they are asked to remain as passive learners of knowledge, dispensed by faculty members who themselves too often are engaged only minimally in the practice of their particular profession. The net result is that the student may be either disenchanted or gradually come to believe that the epitomy of achievement lies in the academic rather than the practicing role.

Conversely, a professional faculty consisting entirely of practitioners is unlikely to make a significant contribution to the university in its pursuit of academic goals. Perhaps it should be added that these remarks should not be interpreted as an argument against a close affiliation between professional schools and the wider university. Quite the reverse. No profession can benefit its clients if it is out of touch with the mainstreams for the production and the analysis of knowledge. What I am suggesting is that a professional program has failed if it does not produce a preponderence of graduates who are interested in and capable of rendering problem-solving service to people in difficulty. One possible way to resolve this situation is for a portion of the faculties of professional schools to become scientifically and academically respectable through a sophisticated study of the nature of problem-solving itself, leaving to the balance of their faculty colleagues the burden of developing knowledge in the basic sciences relating to each profession.

To say this another way, the principal area of basic research for this group of professional school faculties should relate to the processes by which knowledge is acquired and applied in the diagnosis and treatment of real life problems. Since most professionals are people-oriented, it seems evident that one substantial ingredient in this "science of problem solving" would relate to the behavioral sciences, especially problems of communication and information transfer, and to motivation and the logic of decision making.

Another educational challenge arises from the necessity of developing among professional students the ability to exercise critical judgment. Insofar as judgment can be considered as a skill to be acquired, it seems clear that an essential step in acquiring that skill is the supervised exercise of judgment. I am reminded of an aphorism attributed to Allen Gregg, a reknowned worker on behalf of professional medical education. Gregg once stated that "Good judgment comes from experience; unfortunately, experience comes from bad judgment."

What I am suggesting is that a program of professional education must consciously provide for a systematic exercise or "practice" of judgment on the part of the student. This suggests some kind of "clinical" training, the content of which must be relevant to the major types of judgmental decisions the practicing professional will be called upon to make. Furthermore, students cannot be expected to emerge with an ability to exercise good judgment if they have not had the opportunity to experience the consequences of poor judgment in the course of their training. Since the clinical training of such professionals often relates to some kind of "patient population," it appears crucial that this training be supervised so that the welfare of the patients is not jeopardized while, at the same time, the freedom of the student to make mistakes is maintained. Perhaps I should

emphasize that the critical factor seems to be that the setting be such that the student cannot fail to learn from the mistakes he may commit, or from those committed by others.

The final topic I would like to mention relates to the relationship between the members of a profession and the society they are intended to serve. This relationship, I believe, will be the subject of intense scrutiny in years to come. By definition, professionals are entrusted with the responsibility of making decisions on behalf of their clients that the clients would be incapable of making on their own. At what point should the decision making of professionals give way to the democratic process, or some other mechanism for formulating "public policy?" I do not believe that our present programs of professional education address themselves to this issue with sufficient vigor. The educational programs, standing one step removed from the actual practice of a profession, are in a position to remind the members of that profession of their vested interest in the decisions they make and of the necessity for securing, in some fashion, social legitimation of these decisions. Obviously, we have entered now into an area in which social values, cultural mores and societal needs play an important part in determining what it is professionals are permitted to do vis-a-vis what it is society decides should be retained in its own hands.

I find it interesting to note that virtually all of the professions find themselves practicing in relation to some "lay" fiduciary board of governors, directors, or trustees. I would like to suggest that a key responsibility in the future for universities that educate professionals is to provide concurrent education for members of these fiduciary boards, whether they be trustees of the university, state or national legislators, hospital trustees, or the directors of complex business enterprises which draw heavily upon the talents of professional engineers and managers. These citizens represent the popular voice at the critical decision making points in our society where allocation of resources are made between the many programs of social, economic, and political welfare that a society can undertake. If these fiduciary board members are uninformed about the relationship of given profession to the solution of social problems, it can be expected that they may inappropriately allocate resources to that profession.

More importantly, it should be recognized that the growing body of knowledge and skills within virtually all of the professions makes it possible for any one profession to absorb many times over the amount of resources the society presently allocates to it. These influential citizens therefore have the most difficult task of establishing priorities for society. To what degree, for example, should the improvement of highways and transportation systems be subordinated to the development of space technology and exploration? Or to what degree should the improvement of elementary and secondary schools be subordinated to programs of social welfare for the aged?

Many such examples could be cited, but I believe the point is clear. These crucial societal decisions will probably continue to be made by people who are "non-professional" in the area affected by the decisions. I would argue that the programs of education for professionals have a responsibility to provide appropriate information to these groups that will be helpful to them in making policy level decisions.

In the main, the most fruitful type of information we could provide would be more accurate information about the quality of the work performed by our various professions. If such information were readily available, then public decision makers

could reach a more rational choice concerning the relative costs and benefits of alternative investments on behalf of the public welfare.

Lacking such qualitative measurements, the public is forced to rely upon emotionalism and the degree to which the various professional groups can successfully lobby for programs in their domain. I do not pretend that this element will ever be totally absent from public decision making, but I believe it is a responsibility of the professional schools to contribute to its reduction. To do so will require the direct confrontation of professional educators with faculty members and informed citizens who can speak to questions of values, ethics, and social need. I believe this is an interchange which the present generation of professional students and faculty members could embark upon with considerable enthusiasm. It is the mission of the university to provide a structural framework that will enhance this enthusiasm and make it effective.

In conclusion, let me cite some specific steps that, it seems to me, could help to shorten this gap between the professional schools and the demands being made on the professions. These are simply starting points but they do suggest the directions that it seems to me we must take.

1) Establishment of computerized "fact banks" of information. Certainly the development of such systems would require a considerable investment of time, energies and funds. But beginnings in this direction have already been made, e.g., in a number of Regional Medical Programs where systems are being designed for delivering information quickly on such problems as stroke. The pre-packaged material will be kept current and will be immediately accessible to practitioners by phone, wherever they may be. These programs are still being tested but early experience indicates that although initial steps may be slow and on occasion painful the principle itself appears sound and promising.

In professional schools we could speed the development of such systems by providing resources to those faculty members interested in packaging the basic knowledge of their respective discipline, in a way that would give immediate answers to questions of both students and practitioners.

2) If such computerized bases of problem-solving information could be established, the time spent by faculty in the mere transfer of information could be drastically reduced. Many of the same questions are answered by the same faculty members over and over again. If those answers could be pre-packaged and made easily accessible through the machine, more time and attention of both faculty and student could be given to improving judgmental skills of the student. The need for rote memorization would be drastically reduced. Packaging of information in this fashion might make it possible, also, to shorten the time required for professional education.

3) Professional schools might consider, also, establishing a small team of faculty members who would critically review the clinical training offered to students. We need to determine whether our programs are based on sound educational concepts in terms of, e.g., student involvement, the recognition of individual learning styles and needs, and continuous feedback to students concerning the quality of their performance. An internal program evaluation unit within each school could direct attention to these questions.

4) Implied in my last suggestion is the notion that every professional school needs access to a <u>clinical training</u> situation where students can gain experience

in a realistic setting. Faculty must supervise this experience and, at the same time, test approaches for improving decision-making. Such a step implies, also, the need to develop means of measuring the effectiveness of professional activities on behalf of a patient or a client.

I would propose that in the future students in professional schools spend less time on campus and more time in a social environment that encourages both service and study, e.g., less time in the Medical Center and more time in practitioners' offices or in community health centers where their education will be integrated with the continuing education of the physician. Both would have access to the information banks mentioned earlier. As a result, little change in study patterns would be needed as the student moves from school into practice.

5) As a final suggestion I would urge exploratory conferences with members of the various fiduciary boards so that the University may learn more of the educational needs of these groups as they relate to the professions.

We should make use, also, of the skills of faculties in communications research, e.g., who might be able to give us new insight into the more general public's interpretation of the role of the professionals and the public's expectations for those professions.

We must be willing to try new approaches that appear promising even if they call for modifications of existing curricula, or faculty or professional roles. No growth comes without alteration. The professions that survive will be those willing to change in response to changing social needs.